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1961/07/26

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

SECRET - EYES ONLY

July 26, 1961

TO: C - Mr. Johnson

THROUGH: INR/DDC - Mr. Scott *gus*

FROM: ARA - Mr. Woodward *RFW*

SUBJECT: Policy Recommendations with respect to Paramilitary-Type Operations for Cuba

REFERENCE: Memorandum for Special group of July 25, 1961, entitled "Internal Action Operations Against Cuba"

ARA agrees with the proposals contained in the memorandum of July 25, 1961, entitled "Internal Action Operations Against Cuba."

This Bureau wishes to emphasize particularly its agreement with the types of minimum paramilitary actions contemplated for the immediate future while attempts will be made to assist the consolidation and expansion of opposition political action groups. The reason for this is that ARA has the general impression that sabotage or terrorism-- which goes beyond the political objective of annoying the Castro Government and making its officials appear ridiculous-- may have a counter-productive effect until such time as/has clearly developed a coherent opposition within Cuba.

Likewise, ARA is in agreement with the belief that any expanded operations of a paramilitary nature should follow and be the outgrowth of the development of genuine political opposition movements or increased opposition sentiment.

Consistent with these views, ARA is inclined to the view that unilateral paramilitary-type actions which are not related to any Cuban political movement are likely to be useless or even counter-productive.

ARA likewise wishes to express the hope that covert activities can be as deeply cloaked as possible in order to make it as difficult as possible to attribute these activities to the United States.

It would be greatly appreciated if ARA could be consulted with regard to any planning beyond the stage visualized in the memorandum of July 25, 1961.

ARA/RFWoodward:jk

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25 July 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Special Group

1. SUBJECT: Internal Action Operations Against Cuba

2. INTERNAL SITUATION:

a. Agency Assets. Despite the severe repressive measures instituted by the Castro regime during the April invasion period, the Agency still has in Cuba:

11 general purpose agents (active) with 3 ^{radios} leaders.

2 general purpose agents (inactive ^{at present} ~~but mean~~).

3 trained propaganda agents (could be used as general purpose)

In addition the Agency has available in the U.S. ready for immediate dispatch 3 trained radio operators. Based on very recent debriefings of members of the Cuban underground opposition, we have ascertained that approximately 17 tons of arms, ammunition and miscellaneous equipment is still intact and in the hands of resistance elements in various parts of Cuba, mainly in Oriente Province and in Pinar del Rio. Apparently, there is little or no sabotage equipment (e.g. plastic detonators) so that the underground is unable to conduct such operations until some of this material is introduced into the island.

b. Resistant Elements Active in Cuba: A number of leaders

STATE/L.Smith/Cuba 61-63

reopened Apr 95

18 Apr 95 Doc.# 77; 7 pp.

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- 2 -

of some of the principal internal resistance groups have recently come to the U.S. either legally or black from Cuba and have presented their estimates of internal resistance and outlined their plans. The impression which they gave was that they were being conservative in their estimates and realistic in their assessment of the availability of individuals for active work. In fact, although matters of this sort are always subject to proof, it is our present impression that they have presented a reasonably accurate picture. There is only one group of approximately 100 men located in the Escambray which is operating as a guerrilla force. The remainder of the individuals are living ostensibly normal lives in their homes and at their regular employment. They are, however, willing and able to find time for organization work and, if necessary, for small sabotage operations. The groups with their estimated militant strength are:

MRR (Artime's old group - left of center) -----	150
MRP (Ray's party - left) -----	150
MDC (Catholic Labor Group) -----	100
DRE (student organization) -----	75
UZ (a mixed group covering a broad political area) -----	75
30th of November (Labor group) -----	50
Rescate (remnants of Tony Varona's Authentic group) -----	25
TOTAL	625

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- 3 -

The plan presented by these leaders was based on the understanding that a movement to unify the above groups into a single opposition will, in fact, occur. Apparently, the internal opposition has recognized that its only possible salvation is unity at least until the removal of the Castro regime. Internal unity apparently has been worked out without regard for external Cuban political elements who, as it might be suspected, are not highly considered on the inside and who, according to the leaders contacted, have little political following on the inside. Specifically, the Cuban Revolutionary Council was mentioned as being unacceptable as a leadership element and, in addition, Ray was removed as the MRP leader by the MRP internal executive committee and another individual has been sent to the U.S. to take his place as the MRP U.S. representative.

Unity having been achieved, the leaders proposed a clandestine organization program to cover the entire island with the idea of ultimately achieving an organization with a maximum of 3,000 members. All the leaders asserted that 3,000 is a perfectly feasible maximum and can be achieved by accepting for membership only solid, stable members of the opposition. The reason for limiting the numbers is that it is believed that this is a manageable membership but still sufficiently large to provide the basis for

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- 4 -

supporting any ultimate moves that might be attempted. Part of the organization effort will include the establishment of communications, both internally and from Cuba to the U.S.

All the leaders were of the opinion that given the present situation in Cuba, some outward evidence of opposition is essential for morale purposes and as an aid to recruitment. In their unanimous opinion, this evidence is best provided by small acts of sabotage. The type of actions which they contemplate are disruption of transportation facilities through insertion of additives in gas tanks and trucks on highways; small bombings for nuisance value at political rallies and public meetings (not involving personal injury); harassment of public figures to make them and the regime appear ridiculous; and propaganda to exploit and publicize these opposition actions. The function of the internal organization, in addition to increasing its membership and forming compartmented nets as indicated above, will be to collect intelligence, carry on propaganda activity, provide mechanisms for the dispatch and reception of exfiltration and infiltration of men and material; and to achieve the types of sabotage described above.

Although a central leader has not yet been selected, it is believed that one of the men with whom we recently had contact has a very good chance of being the individual chosen. There will, of course, be a liaison relationship between the internal

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CH 104

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U-304

- 5 -

groups and the Cubans in the U.S. even though the latter are not acceptable for leadership. They can, however, provide aid and advice. Moreover, assuming that they wish to infiltrate themselves at some point, it is quite possible that they can over a period of time attain a more prominent position.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the foregoing, it is our belief that there is a good chance of achieving the internal unification of a substantial portion of the internal Cuban opposition and an equally good chance of helping the unified party expand its membership. It is not, of course, clear how successful this expansion can be or to what extent it can evade the internal security forces. On the other hand, a failure to provide any support at this stage particularly in the light of existing specific requests would inevitably be interpreted as an affirmative decision by the U.S. to the effect that internal opposition can have no place in U.S. plans. This will surely result in either a disbanding of existing groups plus the possibility of many of them joining the other side. It will surely mean that any future effort to find opposition will be enormously increased. Since the organization period, which it is expected must last a minimum of three months and may well extend over a period of six to eight months, will be one of minimal overt activity, it will not involve the U.S. in binding commitments. Consequently, should the organization fail in its purpose, there will be no real problem in terminating support.

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U-167

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If on the other hand, the organization period succeeds, there is no commitment to undertake further activity although it will be possible, based on the new facts, to contemplate the advisability of sterner measures.

There are rumors to the effect that considerable dissatisfaction exists in Cuba and there has even been one report from Mexico to the effect that Castro is rather rapidly losing his popular appeal. It is not our belief that these are accurate conclusions. Assuming, however, that they are, it could be argued that the U.S. policy should permit this dissatisfaction to increase on its own and not take active measures to augment it. Such a course would, it is believed, be short-sighted since, even if dissatisfaction were substantially to increase, it would be very much to the advantage of the U.S. for the future to have some association with the opposition. Moreover, the U.S. participation during the organizational build-up period should not be of such a nature as to interfere with any spontaneous dissatisfaction.

It is, therefore, recommended that:

A. The CIA be authorized to provide support to the internal opposition particularly with a view to enabling it to consolidate the proposed unity and to enlarge its membership. This support will involve money, communications, transportation (maritime) and sufficient sabotage material to enable the opposition to carry out small operations of the types indicated above. Authority should also

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CH-168

be given to provide training which will undoubtedly be necessary in a number of categories such as communications, organization and intelligence work and use of sabotage equipment.

E. The CIA be authorized to continue to work with such of the Cuban elements outside of Cuba as appear to have assets available for increasing internal opposition. It is understood that care must be taken to avoid competition and conflict which could be damaging to the overall effort. In this connection it will be important to determine whether any particular movement begins to emerge as the primary and most forceful leader. If so, it will be important to decide whether or not support should be focused more directly to it. Since this is a political issue, CIA will maintain close liaison with State in analyzing its progress.

C. CIA be authorized to plan more elaborate sabotage activities as well as potential guerrilla support activities with the understanding, however, that these plans are not to be put into effect prior to their approval by the Special Group.

As the Special Group is aware, CIA is presently paying a civilian budget for the Cuban Revolutionary Council. Nothing has been said in this paper about the future of this support as it is understood that it is to be considered by the State Department in the near future. It might be said, however, that it is the CIA position that these payments should very soon be reduced in size and very probably should be terminated soon thereafter.

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CM 149

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